

**From:** Jim Wing [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:25 AM  
**To:** Brad Kilger <[bkilger@losaltosca.gov](mailto:bkilger@losaltosca.gov)>; Jim Sandoval <[jsandoval@losaltosca.gov](mailto:jsandoval@losaltosca.gov)>; Dave Brees <[DBrees@losaltosca.gov](mailto:DBrees@losaltosca.gov)>  
**Subject:** [External Sender]Halsey House Direction

Los Altos Mayor and Distinguished Council Members

Council 3-23-21 Meeting Agenda Item 9, Halsey House Direction

**Halsey Redwood Trees have more historical significance than Halsey House**

**Invest in saving Redwood Trees from dying instead of Halsey House**

**I support PARC Commissioner Dailey recommendation to remove Halsey House from Historic Resource Inventory and starting CEQA process for full demolition.**

**Over programming will damage Los Altos “gem” of Nature Preserve**

My recommendations are based on following considerations:

- **Saving Redwoods is high priority investment;** All Coastal Redwoods in Redwood Grove are in various stages of dying. Thirty-three have been lost or drastically cutback in the past 10 years. Root cause of problem is Coastal Redwoods above 50/60 feet tall must get 50% of daily water [50 gallons] from high humidity morning fog that Los Altos does not have. Todd Dawson, UC Berkeley and Steve Sillett, Humboldt State have researched this problem and published mitigation options. The wrong species of Redwood tree was planted in Redwood Grove, but with investment in forestry restoration many of 128 left, may be saved.
- **Programming damages our “gem” of Nature Preserve.** Parks Master plan classifies Redwood Grove as a Nature Preserve with the understanding that it is very fragile and heavy programming will do damage. Every year after summer youth camps, I see damage to creekbanks that cause erosion, native grass and plants beaten into ground, damage to animal nests, and broken tree limbs. Programming several years ago allowed children to damage Adobe Creek bank next to north Sycamore Tree and erosion from annual flooding has now formed diversion channel that bypasses car bridge. Any expansion of programming must always consider what damage will be caused.
- **Flooding** – I saw standing water in Halsey House gathering room during 1976 heavy rain storms. Flood water covered both lower and upper west side porches and was above gathering room glass door bottom frame. Adobe Creek is at high risk of increased future extreme flooding due to chance of fire in its watershed that extends almost up to highway 35 [Skyline Drive]. August 2020 CZU fire came within 0.4 mile

of Adobe Creek watershed. Our floods have been limited for past 100 years because watershed has thick layer of “duff” [dried grass] that soaks up rain water and then does a very slow downhill release. Watershed fire will destroy “duff” and during rain storms we will experience extreme “flash floods” in Redwood Grove.

Thank you for your consideration! Jim Wing, Milverton Road, Los Altos

**From:** [Donna Legge](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Halsey House in Redwood Grove  
**Date:** Sunday, February 28, 2021 9:28:50 PM

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Andrea, for the Halsey House item on March 23, 2021.

Sincerely, Donna

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**From:** John Love [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 27, 2021 9:00 AM  
**To:** [newsroom@latc.com](mailto:newsroom@latc.com)  
**Cc:** Recreation (FAX) <[recreation@losaltosca.gov](mailto:recreation@losaltosca.gov)>; Holly Love [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Halsey House in Redwood Grove

We're writing in response to your article about the Halsey House in Redwood Grove. To us, the discussion is not about the house in and of itself, but about what programs do we want to have at Redwood Grove. And if those programs require a structure of some type, and as per your article, it's less expensive to renovate the Halsey House than to tear it down and build something new, then renovate it.

All three of our children were fortunate enough to participate in many educational programs led by Keith Gutierrez and they loved it! (Here's a photo of our eldest with Keith learning about the Ohlone Indians in Halsey House.) Those were wonderful programs and we strongly encourage getting those going again as part of our Parks and Rec curriculum. Once that commitment has been made, then the decision about the house is much easier, driven by the needs of the educational programs, such as a place for restrooms, a kitchen, a place for in-door classes and activities, or simply for a rainy day.

We know that children benefit greatly from spending time in nature and our community is fortunate to have such a beautiful and unique setting for that right here in Los Altos! We encourage Parks and Rec to focus their time and effort on creating enriching programs for learning about and enjoying nature, our environment and local history, and that lovely grove of redwoods, and let the decision about the Halsey House follow suit.

Best regards,  
John & Holly Love



**From:** [Donna Legge](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Redwood Grove and Halsey House suggestions  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 1:39:00 PM

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Andrea, for March 23 Halsey House item. Thanks, Donna

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**From:** Peter Moran [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 10:06 AM  
**To:** City Council <council@losaltosca.gov>; Donna Legge <dlegge@losaltosca.gov>; Casey Richardson <crichardson@losaltosca.gov>  
**Subject:** Redwood Grove and Halsey House suggestions

Dear Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council members,

**Please utilize Garden House in Shoup Park for Redwood Grove Recreation Programs and tear down Halsey House**

There has been a lot of discussion over the years about restoring the Halsey House in Redwood Grove. Recent posts from local groups advocate for having recreation programs in Redwood Grove and to do those programs a restored Halsey House is necessary to support them.

*Having programs in Redwood Grove and the Halsey House are independent decisions.*

**By utilizing the Garden house in the connected Shoup Park,** the City could have Recreation department programs at Redwood Grove and/or rent out the space to other groups, just like rooms will be rented in the Community Center and park spaces are rented. *In this way, Redwood Grove could be a revenue generator,* in addition to a wonderful local asset. I fully support using Redwood Grove as a venue for City-run and/or for third-party programs.

Regarding the Halsey House, I believe it is not economical, feasible, or reasonable to restore it and it should be demolished.

As you know, the City has spent thousands on studies of the Halsey House, which all say it would cost several million to re-do it. With current ADA requirements, parking, a bridge/road down to the parking, environmental requirements, etc., it would be extremely expensive and it would need to effectively become a new structure.

The studies of Halsey House have been mixed on its historic significance. It is not a historic resource or landmark. It does not have the historic significance to warrant spending a significant amount of City money on restoring it.

I suspect that if the City got serious about re-doing the Halsey House the neighbors owning properties adjoining Redwood Grove would complain about the noise and crime potential of having that facility there. It does not have a good drop-off spot so parents need to park on University to walk their children down into the Grove OR they need to drop their kids off and hope they get safely

down to the program.

However, I believe Redwood Grove does need an appropriate structure for outdoor programs which would enable them to happen year round. Instead of the Halsey House, the City would spend **far** less money and have a more flexible and cheaper-to-maintain structure if **instead, we renovated** the ground floor of the Garden House to be a year-round space that supported programs operating in Redwood Grove or Shoup Park. This has the advantages of serving both parks and having parking drop-off which is not feasible in Redwood Grove. Obviously the building already exists and thus creation of a program/nature center could be done incrementally without a lot of cost. **This facility will not be well utilized once the new Community Center comes on line.**

Thank you,

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- Pete Moran

**From:** [Donna Legge](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Halsey House  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 2:25:09 PM

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Andrea, please see correspondence for Halsey House item at City Council meeting on March 23, 2021

Thanks, Donna

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**From:** Pat Marriot [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 12:55 PM  
**To:** Los Altos Parks & Recreation Commission <[PARCommission@losaltosca.gov](mailto:PARCommission@losaltosca.gov)>  
**Cc:** City Council <[council@losaltosca.gov](mailto:council@losaltosca.gov)>  
**Subject:** Halsey House

Dear Commissioners:

Thank you for the extensive reports on Halsey House.

I urge you to tear the house down and plant more redwood trees. Redwood Grove is a treasure. Halsey House is not.

I know many residents remember happy times at the old house. But now is not the time to make decisions based on memories and emotion.

We have to borrow \$10M to finish our new community center. We have to build an Emergency Ops Center. Our police department is a 55-year-old disaster and we have no funds to fix it.

Commissioners and Council have a fiduciary responsibility to residents, so please vote to demolish Halsey House in the most economical way possible.

Thank you,

Pat Marriott



**From:** [Donna Legge](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Redwood Grove and Halsey House suggestions  
**Date:** Monday, February 8, 2021 10:48:19 PM

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For City Council Meeting on March 23 – Halsey House

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**From:** Joe Eyre [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 8, 2021 8:49 PM  
**To:** City Council <council@losaltosca.gov>; Donna Legge <dlegge@losaltosca.gov>; Casey Richardson <crichardson@losaltosca.gov>  
**Subject:** Redwood Grove and Halsey House suggestions

Dear Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council members,

There has been a lot of discussion over the years about restoring the Halsey House in Redwood Grove. Recent posts from local groups advocate for having recreation programs in Redwood Grove and to do those programs a restored Halsey House is necessary to support them.

*Having programs in Redwood Grove and the Halsey House are independent decisions.*

The City could have Recreation department programs at Redwood Grove and/or rent out the space to other groups, just like rooms will be rented in the Community Center and park spaces are rented, such as Patriot's Corner. *In this way, Redwood Grove could be a revenue generator*, in addition to a wonderful local asset. I fully support using Redwood Grove as a venue for City-run and/or for third-party programs.

Regarding the Halsey House, I believe it is not economical, feasible, or reasonable to restore it and it should be demolished.

As you know, the City has spent thousands on studies of the Halsey House, which all say it would cost several million to re-do it. With current ADA requirements, parking, a bridge/road down to the parking, environmental requirements, etc., it would be extremely expensive and it would need to effectively become a new structure.

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I suspect that if the City got serious about re-doing the Halsey House the neighbors owning properties adjoining Redwood Grove would complain about the noise and crime potential of having that facility there. It does not have a good drop-off spot so parents need to park on University to walk their children down into the Grove OR they need to drop their kids off and hope they get safely down to the program.



However, I believe Redwood Grove does need an appropriate structure for outdoor programs which would enable them to happen year round. Instead of the Halsey House, the City would spend less money and have a more flexible and cheaper-to-maintain structure if one of the following options were pursued:

1. Renovate the ground floor of the Garden House to be a year-round space that supported programs operating in Redwood Grove or Shoup Park. This has the advantages of serving both parks and having parking drop-off which is not feasible in Redwood Grove. Obviously the building already exists and thus creation of a program/nature center could be done incrementally without a lot of cost.
2. Create a shelter in Redwood Grove similar to the one at Arastradero preserve. This shelter enables all types of programs year round, has large doors that can be opened in the warm weather or closed in rainy/cool weather. A couple of restrooms are nearby. Attached are three photos of the Arastradero shelter + one of the restrooms. Something like this would work very well in Redwood Grove.

Either one of the above options would be more flexible, more economical to build and maintain than a renovated Halsey House.

Thank you,

Joe

[REDACTED]

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